

§ 386.13

paragraphs (a) and (b), redesignating paragraphs (c) through (e) as (a) through (c) and by revising the new paragraph (b), effective November 14, 2005. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 386.12 Complaint.

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(b) *Action on complaint of substantial violation.* Upon the filing of a complaint of a substantial violation under paragraph (a) of this section, the Assistant Administrator shall determine whether it is nonfrivolous and meets the requirements of paragraph (a) of this section. If the Assistant Administrator determines the complaint is nonfrivolous and meets the requirements of paragraph (a), he/she shall investigate the complaint. The complainant shall be timely notified of findings resulting from such investigation. The Assistant Administrator shall not be required to conduct separate investigations of duplicative complaints. If the Assistant Administrator determines the complaint is frivolous or does not meet the requirements of the paragraph (a), he/she shall dismiss the complaint and notify the complainant in writing of the reasons for such dismissal.

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§ 386.13 Petitions to review and request for hearing: Driver qualification proceedings.

(a) Within 60 days after service of the determination under §391.47 of this chapter or the letter of disqualification, the driver or carrier may petition to review such action. Such petitions must be submitted to the Assistant Administrator and must contain the following:

- (1) Identification of what action the petitioner wants overturned;
 - (2) Copies of all evidence upon which petitioner relies in the form set out in §386.49;
 - (3) All legal and other arguments which the petitioner wishes to make in support of his/her position;
 - (4) A request for oral hearing, if one is desired, which must set forth material factual issues believed to be in dispute;
 - (5) Certification that the reply has been filed in accordance with §386.31; and
 - (6) Any other pertinent material.
- (b) Failure to submit a petition as specified in paragraph (a) of this sec-

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tion shall constitute a waiver of the right to petition for review of the determination or letter of disqualification. In these cases, the determination or disqualification issued automatically becomes the final decision of the Assistant Administrator 30 days after the time to submit the reply or petition to review has expired, unless the Assistant Administrator orders otherwise.

(c) If the petition does not request a hearing, the Assistant Administrator may issue a final decision and order based on the evidence and arguments submitted.

§ 386.14 Replies and request for hearing: Civil forfeiture proceedings.

(a) *Time for reply.* The respondent must reply within 15 days after a Claim Letter is served, or 30 days after a Notice of Investigation is received.

(b) *Contents of reply.* The reply must contain the following:

(1) An admission or denial of each allegation of the claim or notice and a concise statement of facts constituting each defense;

(2) If the respondent contests the claim or notice, a request for an oral hearing or notice of intent to submit evidence without an oral hearing must be contained in the reply. A request for a hearing must list all material facts believed to be in dispute. Failure to request a hearing within 15 days after the Claim Letter is served, or 30 days in the case of a Notice of Investigation, shall constitute a waiver of any right to a hearing;

(3) A statement of whether the respondent wishes to negotiate the terms of payment or settlement of the amount claimed, or the terms and conditions of the order; and

(4) Certification that the reply has been served in accordance with §386.31.

(c) *Submission of evidence.* If a notice of intent to submit evidence without oral hearing is filed, or if no hearing is requested under paragraph (b)(2) of this section, and the respondent contests the claim or the contents of the notice, all evidence must be served in written form no later than the 40th day following service of the Claim Letter or Notice of Investigation. Evidence must

be served in the form specified in § 386.49.

(d) *Complainant's request for a hearing.* If the respondent files a notice of intent to submit evidence without formal hearing, the complainant may, within 15 days after that reply is filed, submit a request for a formal hearing. The request must include a listing of all factual issues believed to be in dispute.

(e) *Failure to reply or request a hearing.* If the respondent does not reply to a Claim Letter within the time prescribed in this section, the Claim Letter becomes the final agency order in the proceeding 25 days after it is served. When no reply to the Notice of Investigation is received, the Assistant Administrator may, on motion of any party, issue a final order in the proceeding.

(f) *Non-compliance with final order.* Failure to pay the civil penalty as directed in a final order constitutes a violation of that order subjecting the respondent to an additional penalty as prescribed in subpart G of this part.

[50 FR 40306, Oct. 2, 1985, as amended at 56 FR 10183, Mar. 11, 1991]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 70 FR 28481, May 18, 2005, § 386.14 was revised, effective November 14, 2005. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 386.14 Reply.

(a) *Time for reply to the Notice of Claim.* Respondent must serve a reply to the Notice of Claim in writing within 30 days following service of the Notice of Claim. The reply is to be served in accordance with § 386.6 upon the Service Center indicated in the Notice of Claim.

(b) *Options for reply.* The respondent must reply to the Notice of Claim within the time allotted by choosing one of the following:

(1) Paying the full amount asserted in the Notice of Claim in accordance with § 386.18 of this part;

(2) Contesting the claim by requesting administrative adjudication pursuant to paragraph (d) of this section; or

(3) Seeking binding arbitration in accordance with the Agency's program. Although the amount of the proposed penalty may be disputed, referral to binding arbitration is contingent upon an admission of liability that the violations occurred.

(c) *Failure to answer the Notice of Claim.* (1) Respondent's failure to answer the Notice of Claim in accordance with paragraph (a) may result in the issuance of a Notice of Default and Final Agency Order by the Field Admin-

istrator. The Notice of Default and Final Agency Order will declare respondent to be in default and further declare the Notice of Claim, including the civil penalty proposed in the Notice of Claim, to be the Final Agency Order in the proceeding. The Final Agency Order will be effective five days following service of the Notice of Default and Final Agency Order.

(2) The default constitutes an admission of all facts alleged in the Notice of Claim and a waiver of respondent's opportunity to contest the claim. The default will be reviewed by the Assistant Administrator in accordance with § 386.64(b), and the Final Agency Order may be vacated where a respondent demonstrates excusable neglect, a meritorious defense, or due diligence in seeking relief.

(3) Failure to pay the civil penalty as directed in a Final Agency Order constitutes a violation of that order, subjecting the respondent to an additional penalty as prescribed in Subpart G of this part.

(d) *Request for administrative adjudication.* The respondent may contest the claim and request administrative adjudication pursuant to paragraph (b)(2) of this section. An administrative adjudication is a process to resolve contested claims before the Assistant Administrator, Administrative Law Judge, or Hearing Officer. Once an administrative adjudication option is elected, it is binding on the respondent.

(1) *Contents.* In addition to the general requirements of this section, the reply must be in writing and state the grounds for contesting the claim and must raise any affirmative defenses the respondent intends to assert. Specifically, the reply:

(i) Must admit or deny each separately stated and numbered allegation of violation in the claim. A statement that the person is without sufficient knowledge or information to admit or deny will have the effect of a denial. Any allegation in the claim not specifically denied in the reply is deemed admitted. A mere general denial of the claim is insufficient and may result in a default being entered by the Agency decisionmaker upon motion by the Field Administrator.

(ii) Must include all known affirmative defenses, including those relating to jurisdiction, limitations, and procedure.

(iii) Must state which one of the following options respondent seeks:

(A) To submit written evidence without hearing; or

(B) An informal hearing; or

(C) A formal hearing.

(2) [Reserved]